

BRANCHING OUT

Creating Connections to End Sexual Violence

Spring 2009

Volume 3, Issue 1

6th Annual Take Back the Night

By Katy Adler



As some of you may know, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). To bring greater awareness of sexual violence to Racine County we will be hosting our 6th annual Take Back the Night (TBTN) event on **April 2nd, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the DeKoven Center's Great Hall (600 21st Street Racine, WI 53403).** Though many of you may have attended TBTN in the past, there may be some of you who have never attended a TBTN. I would like to encourage everyone (and in particular those who have never attended) to attend and support and honor survivors of sexual violence.

TBTN events are held nationwide, and activities include marches, speak-outs, candle-lit vigils, and rallies. Activities may vary among TBTN events, but the common thread throughout is to bring awareness to sexual assault within communities and to give power back to survivors and the community as a whole. The TBTN in Racine is no exception, and everyone is invited to attend and support the cause.

The TBTN event is free and family-friendly (children of all ages are welcome to attend; however, some of the activities, including the survivor stories, may be more appropriate for children ages 12 and older.) Food and refreshment will be provided, as well as a number of activities. One of the activities that will be available is a listening booth, where a collection of survivor stories, Voices of Courage, can be heard. Attendees will also have the opportunity to contribute to a craft project to display their support for survivors. In addition, the Clothesline Project, a collection of t-shirts created by survivors and support people, will be on display. Other activities include a candle-lit vigil and a speak-out against sexual violence. Finally, we are honored to have three speakers with us this year, including Carmen Pitre, the Executive Director from Milwaukee's Task Force on Family Violence and two Survivors of sexual violence.

If you are interested in making a contribution to help support the event, volunteering at the event, or just want to learn more about it, please feel free to call us at 262-619-1634 or email me at kadler28@lsswis.org. I look forward to seeing you there!

— Katy

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Face To Face

By Lora Schultz Reinders

Spring is just around the corner and that means our annual Take Back the Night Event is almost here too! This is a community event to show our support for survivors, and demonstrate our concern about this very important issue. We hope it is also a potential healing experience for those who have been victimized by sexual abuse or assault.

Many times victims can feel isolated, as though they are alone in their pain. Take Back the Night is an event that can allow a survivor to see how many people this tragedy affects. Through our star display, the magnitude of the problem is demonstrated. Each person we have served face to face has a star. Each year the number of stars grow and soon they will be covering an entire wall. Our hope is with this demonstration each victim will feel less isolated.

Community members who show their support through their presence or their words can also help to counter the feelings of isolation a victim may feel. Support systems are one of the most important healing factors for a victim, whether they are formal or informal. Each person's presence at the Take Back the Night event is a way to demonstrate to survivors that the community supports them.

During Take Back the Night, survivors and their friends or family members are able to come to the front of the stage and briefly tell the attendees how sexual assault has impacted their own lives. This "speak-out" can allow a victim to feel a sense of mastery over his or her story, and empower him or her against the silence that offenders often use to facilitate their crimes.

Whether you choose to come to the event for your own healing, or to show your support for survivors, your presence matters.

— Lora

SAS Wish List

- Volunteer Advocates!
- Gift cards/certificates from Target, Office Depot or other discount stores
- Courage to Heal book series
- New clothes for victims at the hospital (t-shirts, sweat pants, underwear, etc.)
- Gift bags filled with body lotions & shower gels to be given to victims at the hospital
- General art and craft supplies

SAS Fourth Quarter Statistics October—December 2008

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Crisis Line Calls..... | 52 |
| Racine Hospital Visits..... | 13 |
| Burlington Hospital Visits..... | 4 |
| Legal Advocacy Sessions..... | 13 |
| New Counseling Clients..... | 17 |
| Counseling Sessions..... | 117 |
| Community Presentations..... | 30 |
| CAC Appointments..... | 37 |

*Are you a caregiver of a child
who has been sexually abused?
Are you looking for support and healing?*

We may have what you are looking for.

**Sexual Assault Services of Lutheran Social Services
and**

**Children's Service Society of Wisconsin will soon be
offering a support group for non-offending caregivers
of children who have been sexually abused.**

The support group is a place where you can...

- Explore how the abuse has affected your child and your family.
- Learn about how to help your child and family heal.
- Reduce feelings of isolation and aloneness.
- Have your feelings and experiences acknowledged and accepted.
- Receive support from other caregivers and provide support to them.

**Please call Sexual Assault Services at 262-619-1634
or Children's Service Society of Wisconsin at
262-633-3591 to register
for the group.**

**All group members will
need to meet with one of
the facilitators before beginning
the group for an
orientation session.**

**The group is confidential
and provided at no cost.**





Western Racine County Corner

By Vicki Biehn

In the last newsletter, I discussed how the Racine County Family Violence Community Coalition is devoting 2009 towards raising our awareness about bystander intervention. As a brief reminder, bystander intervention occurs when a person or group of people decides to intervene by speaking up or taking action because they are concerned about an individual's safety or the message that others are conveying through behavior or words (i.e., intervening when someone is telling a sexist joke.)

The Coalition will be presenting to the students at Catholic Central High School on bystander intervention on April 1st at 11:30am. The presentation will educate the students about what bystander intervention is, the importance of intervening, and how to intervene safely. We are excited about passing on this vital primary prevention tool to the youth of our community. If you or your organization would like a presentation on bystander intervention, please contact Vicki Biehn at 262-763-6226 ext 31 or vbiehn@lsswis.org.

The coalition will also have a table at the Burlington Home Show on Saturday, March 28th from 9-3pm. At this display there will be interactive questionnaires that community members can complete to test and increase their knowledge of community resources and bystander intervention techniques. When a community member completes one of the surveys, they will receive a free pin or wristband to show support for the prevention of child abuse and sexual assault.

— Vicki

6th Annual Take Back the Night

Racine's 6th Annual Take Back the Night will be held on Thursday, April 2nd, 2009. The event will be held from 6:00- 8:00 p.m. in DeKoven Center's Great Hall.

The event will include three speakers, an open mic speak-out, a candle-lit vigil and march, the Clothesline Project and Stars of Courage displays, food, drinks and other activities.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend this free community event. So mark your calendars now and show your support as we work to end sexual violence in our community!

Call For Submissions...



If you are a survivor or you know a survivor who would like to submit a poem, short story, artwork or editorial for publication in this newsletter, please email it to Samantha Sustachek (ssustachek@lsswis.org).



Congratulations Barb!

On the evening of February 12th, SAS Volunteer Advocate *Barb Rigden* and her family traveled to Madison where Barb received the Governor's Senior Corps Participant recognition for volunteer service at an awards ceremony and dinner held in honor of all the 2009 Governor's Service Recognition award winners. Barb was nominated for this award by the Volunteer Center of Racine for her outstanding work as a SAS Advocate. Of all Barb's volunteer work, she named SAS as most near and dear to her heart.

Here at SAS, we know that we have an exceptional group of volunteers, and we are so pleased to have one of them acknowledged for her hard work. We are extremely proud of Barb! She is very deserving of this prestigious award.

I hope you will all join me in saying *Congratulations Barb! You did it!*



Barb Rigden with Volunteer Center staff (above) and family (below).



6th Annual
TAKE BACK THE NIGHT



Take a stand against sexual assault and abuse!
Support those who have been sexually assaulted!

Join Us On
Thursday, April 2nd 2009
6:00-8:00 pm

DeKoven Center's Great Hall

600 21st St. Racine WI 53403

Speakers Include Carmen Pitre and two Survivor of Sexual Violence
Speak-out Candle lit Vigil Clothesline Project Food

Brought to you by
SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES

RACINE OFFICE
1220 MOUND AVE. SUITE 304
RACINE, WI 53404

BURLINGTON OFFICE
487 S. PINE ST.
BURLINGTON, WI 53105

24-Hour Crisis Lines: (262) 637-SAFE or 1(800) 656- HOPE
For more information call Sexual Assault Services at (262) 619-1634

 **Lutheran Social Services**
of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, Inc.

 **United Way**
United Way
of Racine County
Partner Provider



Helping Hands

By Samantha Sustachek

At Sexual Assault Services, we pride ourselves on having a fantastic group of volunteer advocates, so in this edition of Branching Out, "Helping Hands" would like to spotlight our very own dedicated and talented Barb Rigden.

Barb discovered SAS volunteer opportunities through an article in the newspaper and "hoped I could help." She was trained in March of 2002, and for the past seven years, she has been dedicating almost as much time to the SAS crisis hotline as SAS staff members! While our volunteer program asks for a commitment of only one 24-hour shift per month, Barb regularly covers four or more shifts.

SAS is not Barb's only volunteer position, however. She began volunteering in Racine soon after moving here in 1965, and has not stopped since! Her regular volunteer posts have included the Volunteer Center of Racine, Triad (a community group working on senior safety issues), Crime Stoppers, the Police Information Center at Regency Mall, Friends of the Wind Point Lighthouse, United Way of Racine County, and many others too numerous to mention. In 2008, Barb donated a total of 1428 volunteer hours to Racine County.

Barb works these many volunteer hours in addition to her paid work at the Aurora Walk-In Clinic and for emergency services at Gateway. Her work history is in healthcare, primarily in the realm of emergency services, but she actually has a longer history of volunteer work than she does paid employment. In 1986, she needed to find a paid position to help support her family when her husband suffered a disability. Unfortunately, she also found herself with no paid work history, but she says her "volunteer record and my new trainings as an EMT got me jobs." Barb is a shining example of the value of volunteerism!

With all the work she puts in, whether paid or volunteer, it is surprising that Barb has time for anything else. She does enjoy reading, however, as well as spending time with family. She calls her five children, nine grandchildren, and one great granddaughter "a great delight and good helpers to us."

When asked about SAS and the qualities that make a good Volunteer Advocate, Barb cites being non-judgmental and compassionate as tops on the list. She also mentions a willingness to be up at all hours. And although her personal greatest challenge in SAS Advocacy is getting out of bed to go to the hospital in the middle of a cold winter night, she finds herself rewarded when she arrives and is able to help a survivor through the tough questioning and exam a hospital visit entails.

Recently, Barb received a 2009 Governor's Service Recognition Award (this accomplishment is highlighted separately in this issue of Branching Out), and we here at SAS could not be more proud of her!

Barb's selfless giving to the community makes Racine a better place to live, and we are so happy her accomplishments have been acknowledged in such an important way. Barb, however, remains ever humble about her contributions and simply says, "Hopefully all of the volunteer work I have done for many years has shown our children and grandchildren that giving back to the community is how the world keeps moving on."

— Sam

Please feel free to copy and display the Take Back the Night flyer on the facing page at your agency or place of business. We appreciate your support!



Legislative Update

By Vicki Biehn

On Tuesday, March 24, 2009, the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA) and the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WCADV) will hold their bi-annual Lobby Day. This is a day that is set aside for citizens who are concerned about sexual and domestic violence to talk with their Wisconsin Senators and Representatives about these issues. WCASA and WCADV will update the attendees on March 24 about any upcoming bills or legislation that pertains to sexual and domestic violence survivors. The attendees will then meet with their representatives to share their desire for the representative to support or oppose the legislation that impacts sexual and domestic violence survivors.

This year WCASA and WCADV have provided petitions for individuals to sign. These petitions are for those who are unable to attend the lobby day but wish to express their concern to their representatives about sexual and domestic violence issues. These petitions include statements that encourage the representatives to educate themselves on these issues, support WCASA's and WCADV's legislative agendas, and to promote policy that improves the lives of people impacted by sexual and domestic violence. If you are interested in signing a petition please contact Vicki Biehn at 262-763-6226 ext 31 or vbiehn@lsswis.org.

In the next Branching Out Newsletter I will update you about how lobby day went and any upcoming legislation that you can discuss with your representative.

— Vicki



Sexual Assault Services
1220 Mound Ave., Suite 304
Racine, WI 53404

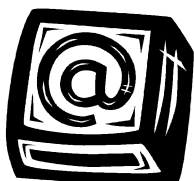
Contact Us!

SAS Racine Office
1220 Mound Ave. Suite 304
Racine, WI 53404
262-619-1634

SAS Burlington Office
480 S. Pine St.
Burlington, WI 53105
262-763-6226 Ext. 31

24 Hour Crisis Line: 262-637-SAFE (7233)

Stay Connected!



Join our News and Events email update list! Would you like to receive information on upcoming SAS events and volunteer opportunities? Email Samantha Sustachek at ssustachek@lsswis.org with "SAS news and events" in the subject line and she will include you in all SAS news and events related emails.

Sexual Assault Services seeks to create a safe and compassionate environment to help promote the healing of sexual assault survivors and their support people.